



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 14, 2014

DATE: September 12, 2014

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Ken Retterath, Interim Director, Department of Social Services
kretterath@washoecounty.us 775-785-8600

THROUGH: Kevin Schiller, Assistant County Manager

SUBJECT: Acknowledge receipt of the Community-based Veterans Services
Program Status Report (All Commission Districts)

SUMMARY

The Department is providing the Board a program status report on the recently-implemented Community-based Veterans Services Program.

Strategic Objective supported by this item: Safe, Secure, and Healthy Communities.

PREVIOUS ACTION

On March 25, 2014, the Board approved a Veterans Services Office Agreement, in response to Request for Proposal (RFP) #2886-14 for community-based Veterans services, to the lowest responsible, responsive proposer, meeting specification, between the County of Washoe and Veterans Resource Centers of America, in an amount up to \$189,894 annually, to be effective upon execution through June 30, 2015 with up to two (2) - one (1) year extensions at Washoe County's option.

BACKGROUND

The intent of the agreement with Veterans Resource Centers of America is to have an experienced community-based Veteran Services Agency administer all aspect of a new Veterans Services Office under the purview of the Washoe County Department of Social Services.

Prior to this agreement, Washoe County currently had no formal program to assist the over 50,000 veterans and their spouses, dependents and survivors. Veteran Services Officers (VSOs) act as an advocate during the application and appeals process for U.S. Veteran's Administration benefits. A VSO is a professional certified by the U.S. Veteran's Administration to act on behalf of and represent Veterans.

AGENDA ITEM # 10N

Veterans Resource Centers of America now has two full-time VSOs assisting Veterans and their spouses, dependents and survivors of all ages and all branches of service to assure they receive benefits they are eligible for. VSO Certification training provides specialized knowledge in order to meet the needs of every individual veteran or other beneficiary who seeks assistance. They also assist Veterans reintegrate into society by providing referral to community services and connecting them to the US Veterans Administration.

The program will ensure that the local office provides:

- availability for walk-in clients at all times
- outreach is conducted routinely in the community, including homeless shelters, Veteran's residences, senior center locations and long-term care facilities
- adequate support for telephone calls, reception, and the large amount of paperwork generated by applications and appeals

The program began seeing clients in May and launched their outreach program at various community sites in early June. Through mid-September, the program has had contact with 720 Veterans and written 191 claims. The goal of the program in the first year was for each VSO to provide services to 300 Veterans (or 600 for the program). Detailed data, by site, is attached.

Veterans Service Offices in other communities have shown to significantly increase pension and compensation, access to education, training, medical care and other state and federal benefits, including "aid and attendance" funds that can be used to purchase long-term care (in-home, group home or nursing home care), which results in savings to City, County and State government tax dollars. In addition, Veterans increase their ability to live independently and support their families.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact of this program status report.

RECOMMENDATION

Acknowledge receipt of the Community-based Veterans Services Program Status Report.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be "move to acknowledge receipt of the Community-based Veterans Services Program Status Report".

**Washoe County Veterans Services Program
Outreach Report
May - September 2014**

720 Veterans Contacted / 191 Claims Written



No NV Veterans Resource Center

Contacts 282

Claims 118



Neil Road Community Center

Contacts 30

Claims 5



Incline Village

Contacts 139

Claims 0



Cold Springs Senior Center

Contacts 57

Claims 11



Reno Senior Center

Contacts 117

Claims 34



Sparks Senior Center

Contacts 30

Claims 4



Sun Valley Senior Center

Contacts 41

Claims 9



Evelyn Mount Community Center

Contacts 15

Claims 8



Gerlach Senior Center

Contacts 9

Claims 4